

[Translation]

WRITTEN OPINION (Sent on 15. 3. 2005)

2. Cited references and Explanations

Cited reference 1: JP 2002-114009 A (Bridgestone Corporation)

2002. 04. 16, claims 1-5, Figures 1 and 2

Cited reference 2: JP 8-91025 A (Bridgestone Corporation)

1996. 04. 09, Claims, Figures 1 and 2

Cited reference 3: JP 8-85310 A (Bridgestone Corporation)

1996. 04. 02, Claims, Figures 1, 3 and 5

Inventions recited in claims 1, 3 and 6-8 have no novelty or inventive step in view of cited references 1, 2 or 3. Cited references 1-3 describe a tire comprising: steep-angle grooves inclined at an angle of not more than 45 degrees relative to the circumferential direction, ends of the steep-angle grooves near the equatorial plane terminating in the land; and recessed portions formed along the tire axial direction inner sides of the steep-angle grooves, a depth of the recessed portions increasing and a depth of the recessed portions decreasing from longitudinal directional middle portions of the steep-angle grooves to ends of the steep-angle grooves near the tire equatorial plane.

The invention recited in claim 2 has no inventive step in view of cited reference 1. It is a technical matter obvious to those skilled in the art to determine, in the invention described in cited reference 1, the angle of the land side wall surfaces of the recessed portions with consideration to rigidity of the land and water drainage ability.

The invention recited in claim 4 has no novelty or inventive step in view of cited references 2 or 3. Cited references 2 and 3 describe to set the length of the recessed portions in the tire circumferential direction to about 50 % of the pitch of the steep-angle grooves.

The invention recited in claim 5 has no inventive step in view of cited reference 1. It is a technical matter obvious to those skilled in the art to determine, in the invention described in cited reference 1, the height of the deepest portions of the recessed portions with consideration to rigidity of the blocks and water drainage ability.

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The invention recited in claim 9 has no novelty or inventive step in view of cited reference 1. Claim 5 of cited reference 1 describes to provide the circumferential grooves at positions of about 50 % of the tread half width.